

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE C-1

WASHINGTON TIMES
2 May 1984

SMITH
HEMPSTONE

Moynihan was only flirting

When last seen, Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the pixie-like New York Democrat, was resigning — and then just as quickly unresigning — the vice chairmanship of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in a huff over the CIA's breaking its "relationship of trust" in failing to inform the committee fully and properly about the agency's role in the mining of Nicaraguan harbors.

Gloriosky, Comandante Zero, could this be the same Daniel Patrick Moynihan who, along with fellow neoconservatives Irving Kristol, Nathan Glazer and Daniel Bell, founded *The Public Interest*? The very broth of a boy who used to flay the United Nations for its hypocrisy and the Soviet Union for its brutality?

Indeed it is, which only goes to show how Sen. Moynihan — or our perception of him — has changed over the years. Dinesh D'Souza, writing in the current edition of *Policy Review*, a quarterly published by The Heritage Foundation, suggests it's a little bit of both, plus just a tad of opportunism.

Three years after his 1976 election to the Senate, Mr. Moynihan's rating (on a scale of 1 to 100) by the liberal Americans for Democratic Action was 47, low enough to qualify him as a card-carrying neoconservative and potential successor to Sen. Scoop Jackson as head of the Democratic Party's right wing.

But in the months leading up to Ronald Reagan's election in 1980, the New Yorker took a sharp left turn and his ADA rating shot up to 72 for that year.

Since then, Mr. Moynihan has voted consistently against major elements of Mr. Reagan's policies — tax cuts, budget cuts, increased aid to El Salvador, nerve gas, anti-busing legislation, the proposed deployment of MX missiles in Minuteman silos, and the liberation of Grenada. By 1982, his ADA rating

was up to 95 or (from the liberal point of view) near-perfect, completing his *hejira* from left to right and back left again.

Mr. D'Souza holds that Mr. Moynihan cannot properly be accused of deserting the neoconservative camp on domestic matters, despite his notorious 1969 "benign neglect" paper on blacks, because "he never entered it." Rather, the ostracism of the civil rights lobby "foisted" neoconservatism on a man who had attacked President Dwight D. Eisenhower for building highways rather than hospitals and public housing.

In foreign affairs, Mr. Moynihan's neoconservative credentials are more solid. He was one of the first Democrats to recognize and articulate the essential worthlessness of the United Nations. He identified President

Idi Amin of Uganda as the racist murderer he was. He excoriated the Soviets for their gross violations of human rights.

Yet in retrospect it would seem that Mr. Moynihan's relationship with the neoconservatives — who themselves have changed, moving in some instances to the right of the Republican party — was more of a flirtation than a marriage. And perhaps rightly so from an empirical point of view: in a liberal democratic state, the senator need not fear being outflanked on the right; the only threat to him within the Democratic Party, real or putative, comes from the left.

Mr. D'Souza holds that the senator's views on foreign policy are an amalgam of "Cold War liberalism and Wilsonian idealism," which casts the United States in the role of an "evangelist for democracy" within the constraints of international law (hence his objection to the Grenada adventure).

The author of the *Policy Review* article offers a final intriguing explanation for Mr. Moynihan's seemingly aberrant voting record: that he is a countercyclical politician who "is at his most articulate when he is zapping the regnant administration, bucking the Zeitgeist, being outrageous."

Certainly the senator from New York has been more conscious than most of the figure he cuts in the eye of the press. Whether he would sober up and swing back toward the center in the unlikely event of Mr. Reagan's defeat by Walter Mondale in November is anybody's guess.

Certain of Mr. Moynihan's neoconservative friends, according to Mr. D'Souza, suspect the senator would like to be the vice presidential candidate of Mr. Mondale (whose candidacy he supports), or at least to be offered State or the Pentagon in the Minnesotan's administration.

There are those, of course, who would argue that the very fact that Sen. Moynihan attaches any value to the Democratic vice presidential nomination in 1984 is ample evidence of just how far he has drifted from the realities of the world.

When all is said and done, it would seem that Mr. Moynihan at heart remains today what he was when he launched his political career in 1960: a Kennedy Democrat who at least has the virtue of seldom being dull. Like not a few others, he has never quite recovered from the collapse of Camelot.

Smith Hempstone is executive editor of The Washington Times. The views expressed in Mr. Hempstone's column are not necessarily those of The Times.